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New York

President:	Sir Mark Lyall Grant	(United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
Members:	Azerbaijan	Mr. Musayev
	China	Mr. Xing Jisheng
	Colombia	Ms. Moya
	France	Mrs. Le Fraper du Hellen
	Germany	Mr. Roessel
	Guatemala	Ms. Leiva Roesch
	India	Mr. Raguttahalli
	Morocco	Mr. Iziraren
	Pakistan	Mr. Siddique
	Portugal	Ms. Cortes Palma
	Russian Federation	Mr. Demin
	South Africa	Mr. Crowley
	Togo	Mr. Waguena
	United States of America	Mr. Banks

Agenda

The situation in Somalia

Special report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2012/74)

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The meeting resumed at 3.05 p.m.

The President: Under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Ethiopia to participate in this meeting.

I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than four minutes, in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously.

I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

Mr. Nishida (Japan): I would first like to extend warm congratulations to His Excellency Sir Mark Lyall Grant, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the United Nations, on his assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of March and, of course, to express appreciation for his leadership in convening this open debate on Somalia at this timely juncture. I also would like to express my appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Elmi Ahmed Duale, Permanent Representative of the Somali Republic, for his statement, and to Ambassador Augustine Mahiga, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, for his briefing.

I wish to highlight that a large window of opportunity has finally opened for Somalia, which has seen more than 20 years of devastation. That was made possible thanks to the efforts of the Somali Transitional Federal Government (TFG), the Somali people and the international community. Japan extends its sincere appreciation to the forces of the Somali TFG and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), recently joined by troops from Kenya and Djibouti, as well as Ethiopia. They have spared no efforts to combat Al-Shabaab despite huge sacrifices. It is high time for the international community to echo those efforts.

In that context, Japan welcomes the adoption of resolution 2036 (2012), which allows for more sustainable assistance to AMISOM operations. We commend Ambassador Mahiga for his dedication to Somalia, including his mediation role and his decision to relocate the United Nations Political Office for Somalia to Mogadishu.

Japan congratulates all participants on the success of the London conference on Somalia, held on 23 February, in which Japan also took an active part. It was an important occasion for the international community to reaffirm its strong commitment to Somalia. Japan would like to express its appreciation and respect to the United Kingdom for its leadership in making that meeting successful and fruitful. Japan intends to cooperate proactively with other partners, in accordance with the communiqué adopted at the conference.

It should be noted that, over the past year, Somali stakeholders have made tremendous efforts in the Somali political process. Japan expresses its sincere appreciation for the series of agreements that they have made, namely, the Kampala Accord, the road map and, most recently, on 17 February, the second Garowe accord, which paves the way for the end of the transitional period in August. Now that the commitment of the international community has been reaffirmed, it is time for the Somali people to renew their commitment. Japan has committed firmly to the achievement of peace and stability in Somalia and has made a wide range of substantive contributions.

First, together with the European Union, Japan has taken a leading role in efforts for the reinforcement of the Somali and AMISOM police sectors, contributing a total of $38 million through two United Nations trust funds. That contribution currently provides for the stipends of 5,000 Somali police officers, as well as the construction of police stations and the procurement of equipment, including armoured vehicles. Bearing in mind that the needs in that field will increase as TFG and AMISOM forces advance in expanding their control over areas, Japan remains committed to maintaining such police sector assistance.

Japan is also extending assistance to ensure improvement in the humanitarian situation in Somalia, in particular $30 million in assistance to ease the serious famine situation last year. Although the famine crisis has receded, humanitarian needs still remain. We must therefore continue to extend our support.

Furthermore, it is not too early to consider the issue of the reconstruction of Somalia. In that regard, Japan looks forward to taking part in the Istanbul conference in June to discuss the issue. Japan is already engaged in the improvement of infrastructure and the promotion of good governance through various projects, such as the rehabilitation of Mogadishu port and border control training for Somali TFG officers, in partnership with the World Food Programme and the

United Nations Development Programme and the International Organization for Migration, respectively.

Piracy is not only linked to stability in Somalia, but also continues to be a stand-alone, serious threat to international security. We need to continue to conduct anti-piracy operations. Japan is proud of its participation in these vast maritime peace operations, in close collaboration with other coalitions over the past three years, through the continuous deployment of two vessels and two patrol aircraft in the Gulf of Aden. Our escort and surveillance activities have contributed significantly to the safe passage of merchant ships through these areas. Moreover, in June of last year, Japan established its own facility in Djibouti to accommodate its personnel and equipment in order to more effectively conduct these operations. Those efforts clearly demonstrate Japan's strong commitment to the fight against piracy.

While it is commendable that the anti-piracy operations have greatly contributed to the effective prevention of attacks by pirates, Japan has become increasingly concerned about the recent expansion of the area of pirate activity to the western part of the Indian Ocean. As stated in the report of the Secretary-General submitted in January (S/2012/50), the issue of piracy prosecution remains a major task for the international community. Japan is one of 20 countries that prosecute apprehended suspected pirates in their respective countries, and has recently pledged to make an additional contribution amounting to $2 million to the Trust Fund to Support Initiatives of States Countering Piracy off the Coast of Somalia, managed by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, in support of the prosecution of suspected pirates in Somalia and neighbouring States. Also, Japan supports neighbouring coastal nations in enhancing their maritime security and enforcement capacity so that they can tackle Somali piracy on their own.

The TFG can be transformed to become a more democratic and legitimate Government for Somalia. To that end, the upcoming months will be very crucial. Japan urges all Somali stakeholders to implement without further delay the road map and the Garowe Principles adopted at the second Somali National Consultative Constitutional Conference. The next milestone will be the adoption of a new Somali constitution. All stakeholders should play an active role in this important task, and the international community should extend assistance to ensure its realization. Japan, of course, spares no efforts to continue to support Somalia.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Luxembourg.

Ms. Lucas (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): I fully associate myself with the statement made this morning by the observer of the European Union. We commend the United Kingdom for having taken the initiative of organizing this debate on the situation in Somalia, following the important London conference, which the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Luxembourg had the opportunity to attend.

The next six months will be decisive for Somalia. We welcome the progress made in Somalia at the political level with the adoption of a road map and the Garowe Principles, which set ambitious milestones for finalizing the constitutional process and establishing legitimate, stable and representative institutions. It is now primarily up to all Somali political actors, in particular the Transitional Federal Government, to demonstrate their will to seize this opportunity to complete the transition process by August, with the support of the international community, so that the reconciled Somali people may live in peace and security and the Somali authorities may establish the rule of law and leave no room for pirates and terrorists.

In terms of security, we note with satisfaction the recent retreat of the Al-Shabaab militia from certain strategic towns in the south and centre of the country. However, Al-Shabaab continues to pose a serious threat to the security and stability of the country. We welcome the essential contribution and sacrifices of the personnel deployed in the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the operations of neighbouring countries to support the Somali security forces. We commend the Security Council's adoption of resolution 2036 (2012) on 22 February, authorizing an increase in AMISOM's troop ceiling and the deployment of a substantial logistical support package. It is now imperative to ensure the full implementation of that decision, including its financing.

The humanitarian situation remains worrying. Although the World Food Programme has recently announced that the famine is over, close to one third of the population, of which the majority lives in areas controlled by Al-Shabaab, remains in need of emergency humanitarian assistance. We call on all parties to allow

unhindered humanitarian access. The denial of access imposed by Al-Shabaab to the main humanitarian organizations is unacceptable.

A sustainable solution that would help to stabilize Somalia will require a holistic approach combining security, political, humanitarian and development components. We wish to underline, in this regard, the European Union's adoption in November 2011 of its strategy for the Horn of Africa.

Our national engagement is articulated along three lines: political, security and humanitarian. Luxembourg has contributed €750,000 to the United Nations Trust Fund for the Somali security institutions. In parallel, Luxembourg participates actively in the European maritime mission, Operation Atalanta, by providing two reconnaissance planes based in the Seychelles. Luxembourg has also deployed military instructors to the European military training mission, which is training Somali security forces. Luxembourg also remains an important and reliable donor of humanitarian aid. Over the past few years, more than €11 million has been disbursed for the Horn of Africa, more than half of which has gone to Somalia.

To conclude, allow me to affirm that, as pledged by the Deputy Prime Minister in London on 23 February, Luxembourg will continue to support Somalia on the road to stabilization and peace in its national capacity, as well as in the context of the efforts undertaken by the European Union and the United Nations.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt.

Mr. Abdelaziz (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to express my appreciation for your initiative, Mr. President, to convene this open debate on the situation in Somalia. It comes at a critical moment in which the efforts of the Somali parties and other regional and international efforts are mobilized to restore peace and stability in Somalia. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his participation and his valuable contributions to this debate, as well as his Special Representative for Somalia, Mr. Mahiga, for his tireless efforts and important briefing today.

Our meeting today comes just a few days after the London high-level conference on Somalia, held through an important initiative of the United Kingdom. The conference enjoyed wide-scale regional and international participation and crowned the relevant efforts of the Somali people and the international community, including the meeting of the International Contact Group on Somalia, held in Djibouti; the Somali National Consultative Constitutional Conferences, held in Garowe; and the adoption by the Security Council of resolution 2036 (2012). All of these efforts were expressions of the determination of all parties concerned to create a new reality in Somalia that will lay a solid foundation for peace, stability, development and the prospect of a better future for all Somalis.

Furthermore, the relocation of the United Nations Political Office for Somalia to Mogadishu demonstrated the commitment of the United Nations, in cooperation with relevant regional organizations, such as the African Union, the League of Arab States and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, to intensify their work on the ground and to work closely with all Somalis. It also demonstrated the significant gains made in recent months, particularly in the consolidation of security and stability in Mogadishu. That could not have been achieved without the huge sacrifices made by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the Somali security forces, which had led to unprecedented gains for Somalis and for the international community and whose impact on resolving the situation in Somalia should be maximized and put to use.

The adoption of resolution 2036 (2012) — which extended the mandate of AMISOM, increased the number of troops, including enablers and force multipliers, improved the logistical support package provided by the United Nations to AMISOM, and supported the efforts to build the capacity of the Somali forces — was an important step towards consolidating the military gains on the ground in Mogadishu and beyond. However, military action alone cannot resolve the situation in Somalia unless it is supported by a broader strategy to achieve peace and stability that is based on strengthening the political process and reconciliation efforts. In this regard, Egypt reiterates the need to implement the tasks laid out in the road map to end the transition in Somalia, including the adoption of a new constitution and the reform of the parliament, as well as the implementation of the Garowe Principles, adopted in February, all of which are key elements for promoting the political process.

Addressing the development and humanitarian needs of Somalis is also closely linked to efforts to achieve security and stability in Somalia. Therefore,

the international community is required now more than ever to redouble its efforts to support the endeavours of the Transitional Federal Government, supported by AMISOM, to extend State authority beyond Mogadishu, enhance security and State authority, and provide basic services to the Somali citizens. By the same token, efforts should be redoubled to address the dire humanitarian situation in Somalia. Despite the end of the famine that hit a number of regions in Somalia, more than 2 million Somalis are still in need of urgent humanitarian assistance. All parties should commit themselves to facilitating access of humanitarian relief to all those in need.

Piracy and armed robbery off the coast of Somalia are the results of chaos, the absence of State authority and the lack of development that prevailed in Somalia for two decades. Despite the success of the international community's positive efforts to combat acts of piracy at sea by reducing the number of attacks and lowering the rate of successful attacks, efforts to combat piracy at sea alone will not be able to eliminate the threat it poses to regional and international peace and security unless they are part of a broader strategy that involves addressing the underlying causes of piracy at sea, with all its political, security, economic and humanitarian dimensions directly related to the situation in Somalia.

In this context, Egypt, as a member of the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia and the Board of the Group's Trust Fund, as well as through its chairmanship of the Contact Group's working group IV, has always emphasized and reiterates again today the importance of the adoption by the international community of a comprehensive approach to addressing piracy off the coast of Somalia. Such an approach must build on the progress achieved on the security and political tracks through serious and genuine development efforts to create a new reality in Somalia that meets the needs and aspirations of Somali youth for job opportunities and better standards of living in order to prevent the risk of their involvement in the ranks of armed groups or acts of piracy.

Finally, Egypt will continue to lend its support to all efforts aimed at resolving the crisis in brotherly Somalia in order to allow that country to restore its role in the Arab, African and Islamic spheres. Egypt shall spare no effort to support the Somali people and its institutions, including the security forces and the Coast Guard, particularly by organizing training courses for the Somali cadres, providing humanitarian and medical assistance, and dispatching educational missions from Al-Azhar Al-Sharif in order to contribute to creating a better future for the state of Somalia and for all Somalis.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Italy.

Mr. Ragaglini (Italy): First of all I want to congratulate you, Sir, on assuming the presidency of the Security Council and to thank you for convening this open debate on the situation in Somalia. I also thank the Secretary-General and his Special Representative, Ambassador Mahiga, for their statements.

Italy fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union and would like to add few remarks in its national capacity.

Today's open debate is taking place just a few days after the London conference on Somalia, which was attended by a large representation of Somali leaders and by the major stakeholders on the Somali issue. We are focusing international attention once again on a dire situation that affects millions of Somalis and threatens peace and stability in the Horn of Africa and worldwide. The announced partnership between Al-Shabaab and Al-Qaida was also a troubling development affecting us all and requiring urgent action.

Italy will continue to play an advocacy role for the Somali cause and to support the Somali peace process through concrete initiatives that fully respect Somali ownership and sovereignty. We will host the next meeting of the International Contact Group on Somalia in Rome and ensure an Italian diplomatic presence in Mogadishu. In the field of security, Italy continues to provide funds for the payment of the salaries of over 3,000 Somali security personnel.

Indeed, we believe that the Somalis have the primary responsibility for achieving peace and security in their country. Concrete opportunities exist for the Somalis to reconstruct a viable State at peace with its neighbours. Seizing them requires a strong political will and commitment on the part of the central Government and of regional entities that are committed to achieving successful reconciliation. Italy deems it important to include in the process those Somali groups that clearly renounce violence and terrorism and allow unhindered humanitarian access. The Djibouti peace process provides a framework that is open to all potential Somali stakeholders and continues to be our reference.

The current status quo is not an option, and neither are further extensions of the transition. The road map and the Garowe Principles are positive steps in the peace process. Their full and timely implementation will in due course grant Somalia a new, inclusive and stable governance. To maximize their positive effects and improve the living conditions of the local population, the political strategy should go hand in hand with the military and civilian initiatives.

We welcome the adoption of resolution 2036 (2012), which expands mandate of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and raises the troop ceiling in order to counter Al-Shabaab and other armed opposition groups and establish conditions for effective and legitimate governance across Somalia. We encourage partners, especially new donors, to contribute to funding for AMISOM. We underline once again the importance of strengthening the Somali security forces, which is vital to ensuring Somalia's long-term security and stability. We therefore invite the international community to provide support to the Somali authorities in that critical sector as well.

Security, stability and effective governance will foster Somali development and thereby attack the root causes of terrorism and the scourge of piracy off the coast of Somalia. As we have stated in the past, Italy believes that terrorism and piracy cannot be solved by military means alone. They require a comprehensive and coordinated strategy that combines deterrence, prosecution and the rule of law, capacity-building and development.

Piracy off the coast of Somalia and in the wider Indian Ocean affects the interests both of the people of Somalia and of the international community. We therefore expect a renewed commitment from the Somali authorities. It should complement the international counter-piracy efforts, including the European Union's Operation Atalanta and NATO's Operation Ocean Shield, and the work of the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia. My country, which is a victim of the phenomenon, is deeply committed to these efforts. Hence we encourage our partners, traditional and new, to continue to support all the activities and various initiatives aimed at eradicating terrorism and piracy.

Only a collective, coordinated and continuous effort can produce effective results and help our Somali friends tackle the challenging tasks ahead. We therefore encourage better coordination among the various stakeholders. We expect the United Nations and the African Union to play a more decisive leadership role in promoting peace in Somalia in order to ensure greater consistency between the political process and the ongoing military operations. The enhancement of the coherence, quality and impact of international efforts in reconstructing a viable sovereignty depend on their cooperation. We welcome the recent relocation of the United Nations Political Office for Somalia to Mogadishu as an important step in that direction. We equally support a restructuring of the International Contact Group on Somalia.

Somalia's instability represents a threat to its people, its region and the entire world, since it fosters a multitude of problems. It needs a full sense of responsibility on the part of Somali institutions and a stronger response from the international community, together with our ability to act in a united manner.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Denmark.

Mr. Staur (Denmark): First of all, I would like to align myself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union (EU) on behalf of the EU.

At this moment in time, Somalia faces a new opportunity for progress, to which we must be able to respond. The debate today is therefore very timely. The Security Council has just adopted resolution 2036 (2012) on the situation in Somalia, providing the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) with more troops and powers. Less than two weeks ago, we completed the successful conference in London, where we achieved the double objective of putting the plight of Somalia at the top of the international agenda and of providing traction in the political process.

This debate coincides with the end of the monsoon season in the Indian Ocean and the beginning of the piracy season. As a seafaring nation, Denmark is deeply concerned by that scourge. Two Danish citizens have been held hostage by pirates for more than a year. The Secretary-General has said that piracy is not a waterborne disease, it is a symptom of conditions on the ground. I could not agree more.

There can be no impunity for pirates. Pirates must be prosecuted. We recently have made progress in bringing pirates to justice and in transferring them to appropriate prisons in Somalia. It is important that we continue to work with both the Transitional Federal

Government (TFG) and the regional Government in Hargeisa, and particularly in Garowe, to receive pirates sentenced by courts in the region. It is essential that the necessary legislation be adopted all over Somalia.

A lasting solution to the Somali crisis can only be a political one. Political leadership is what is needed. All stakeholders, especially the Transitional Federal Institutions (TFIs), ultimately hold the primary responsibility for bringing the process forward. Time is of the essence, and it is now up to the TFIs to deliver and to ensure that the political transition ends by August 2012. The strong international message to Somali leaders should be that they must take the responsibility upon themselves, show determination and use the opportunity provided to them by the international community: basically, get to work.

Many actors are involved in finding a solution to the crisis in Somalia. Harmonizing all those efforts is at times complicated and time-consuming. For our efforts to be efficient and effective, and in order to limit transaction costs, it is of paramount importance that coordination happen on the ground, preferably in Somalia, and that it be led by Somalis in close cooperation with the United Nations, the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development. I would like to commend the United Nations for expanding its footprint in Somalia under extremely difficult conditions. However, no one else can lead the process. I urge the United Nations to expand its presence to all regions of Somalia.

Let me now raise another very important issue. We need to do more to ensure that women are included in the political process. Women have remained the bread-winners and the backbone of Somali families during the many years of war. As shown in other conflict situations, peace processes stand a much better chance of being sustainable when women are fully involved. Women can make change happen.

It is of the utmost importance that AMISOM receive sufficient funding. In that regard, we welcome the adoption of resolution 2036 (2012). Denmark has from the very outset been a staunch supporter of the critical functions that AMISOM is performing. As a sign of Denmark's continued support for AMISOM, my Government recently approved an additional unearmarked financial contribution of $5 million to the AMISOM Trust Fund. We encourage others to contribute as well. We are also stepping up our support for the East African Standby Force with a view to facilitating their contribution to AMISOM.

There is an urgent need to fill the political vacuum in the areas newly liberated from Al-Shabaab, thereby strengthening local stability and institution-building. The new stability fund can become a key instrument for supporting long-term stabilization and for consolidating peace in south-central Somalia. Denmark stands ready to contribute to the new fund.

Our broad-based efforts to create stability are part of our efforts to address the root causes of terrorism. Al-Shabaab has shown that it is willing to brutally kill innocent spectators of a soccer match abroad and terrorize Somali people at home. Recently, Al-Shabaab swore its allegiance to Al-Qaida. Obviously, that is unacceptable. We will continue to fight terrorism and prevent the travel, financing and recruitment of terrorists.

Fortunately, the famine in the Horn of Africa is over. However, 2 million people in Somalia are still affected by the crisis. Also, rural communities across the entire region have barely recovered from the last drought and continue to live at the edge of their means. We need to strengthen the resilience of those communities across the region. We need a stronger, more coordinated and longer-term response.

I would like to conclude my statement by underlining Denmark's continued commitment to our common endeavours to seek a peaceful and stable Somalia.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Finland.

Mr. Haavisto (Finland): The observer of the European Union has already spoken, and I associate myself fully with his statement.

Finland is an active member of the international contact group for Somalia, and we participated at last week's London conference at a high level. Finland has been actively supporting the United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS) and the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), for example by supporting the training of TFG security forces. In addition, Finland has been participating with a military vessel in anti-piracy activities on the Somalian coast. In Finland we have a large Somali diaspora, which is also seeking a peaceful solution to the crisis in Somalia in a constructive manner. We have also been supporting the

process of including elders and traditional leaders in the peace dialogue.

Finland wishes to thank the United Kingdom for organizing the recently held Somalia conference in London. It was a very timely meeting that produced very good outcomes. We can see at least four results achieved at the conference.

First, the conference highlighted that Somalia must be put back on the agenda of the international community, and it was successful in doing so.

Secondly, due to the improved security and humanitarian situation in Somalia, the overall message of London was that it is possible to work towards completing the transition period by the end of August and to support reconciliation and development in relatively safe areas. An additional funding mechanism, the so-called local stability fund was created to facilitate actions in those areas.

Thirdly, the London conference also boosted the Security Council's decision, in resolution 2036 (2012), to strengthen AMISOM from 12,000 troops to nearly 18,000. That made it possible to include the Kenyan forces in AMISOM. However, additional funds will be needed. The EU has already announced a new contribution of €100 million.

Fourthly, focus on the root causes of the conflict in Somalia was underlined, and complementary proposals were presented to intensify work on tackling piracy and terrorism.

Finland welcomes all those achievements. It is possible to assist Somalia in a constructive and concrete way despite the challenges in security in many parts of the country. For Finland, it is clear that the future of Somalia is in the hands of Somalis.

We welcome the Garowe process in advancing a new constitution and parliamentary reforms. Those are key building blocks for Somalia in and after the completion of the transition period. It is crucial that the Garowe Principles are agreed among the Somalis. It is positive that they are supported by the United Nations and other partners.

The Garowe Principles emphasize the role of recognized traditional elders in the process towards a post-transition parliamentary structure. Finland's support for UNPOS has focused on utilizing Somali elders and religious leaders as constructive contributors in furthering peace. Finland is willing to consider further support for that work.

It is positive that 30 per cent of the Somalis provisionally adopting the constitution should be women. Gender issues and underlining equal opportunities for all have been an essential part of Finland's development policy for a long time.

It is obvious that both the new constitution as well as the process leading to parliamentary reforms need to be made explained to ordinary Somalis in clear terms that make them feel familiar. Therefore, public awareness campaigns, education and information are called for. We wonder whether Somalis living in the diaspora might also be involved in that work. We believe that in addition to its important remittances to Somalia, the diaspora has an important role to play. The Somali diaspora in Finland supports various development activities in Somalia with complementary funding from the Finnish Government.

Gradually strengthening Somalia's own security forces is essential when rebuilding Somalia as a nation after two decades of non-functioning State structures. Finland has been participating from the beginning in the European Union training mission that trains security personnel for the TFG.

After the end of the transition, there will still be a great need to continue the reconciliation and peace work. The peace process has to be inclusive, and all who want to build Somalia and distance themselves from terrorism should be welcome to contribute to rebuilding the nation. That opportunity should specifically be open to women and youth, who often are excluded from these processes.

Finland values the United Nations and various countries that have established their presence and operations in Mogadishu, despite the obvious security challenges. Only by operating from inside Somalia can the international community fully earn the trust of the Somali people.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Kazakhstan.

Mrs. Aitimova (Kazakhstan): Mr. President, at the outset, on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) group, I would like to congratulate your delegation, Sir, on assuming the presidency of the Security Council and to express our thanks to Togo, an

important OIC member country, for its excellent stewardship of the Security Council in February.

As the OIC Secretary General, Mr. Ihsanoglu, stated recently at the London conference, the organization believes that after more than two decades of conflict and chaos, Somalia today is at a critical juncture. We believe that concerted and decisive actions by the international community, in collaboration with the Somali parties, are now urgently needed more than ever to enable the country to make a new beginning. The outreach efforts of the Transitional Federal Government in the political field are a positive development.

Meanwhile, the expulsion of Al-Shabaab from Mogadishu by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), the Kenyan military operation in southern Somalia, the Ethiopian military offensive in central Somalia, and the sustained fight against piracy have created added momentum towards achieving the goals of the transition.

As we highlight these important achievements, however, we note with dismay the distracting crisis in the Parliament, which could potentially derail the transition. Therefore, we welcome the political agreement reached by the Somalis at their National Consultative Constitutional Conference in Garowe. We are particularly encouraged by the commitment to include a minimum of 30 per cent of women in the Independent Electoral Commission, the Constituent Assembly and the new Federal Parliament. Supporting the empowerment of women and their full participation in political processes in the OIC member States is an important priority for us.

In view of the OIC's comparative advantage, due to its clear cultural and religious affinity and as a result of consultations with a wide spectrum of Somali society and some partners, the OIC has come to the conclusion that there is a need to launch a peace and reconciliation initiative with the relevant parties in order to provide an opportunity to some moderates who are willing to join the peace process and mainstream politics.

A genuine political process of reconciliation is essential to complement the military action in Somalia. Military measures alone will not deliver durable and sustainable peace. We have noted with satisfaction that the exploratory contacts of the OIC with some of the Somali opposition elements have given hope and reinforced the conviction in the necessity to press ahead.

On its part, the international community must ensure that the required support and assistance are provided to the Government in a coherent manner in order to deliver services and security and to extend its authority in the recovered areas. The OIC wishes hereby to reassure the Security Council and all stakeholders of its unflinching support for the achievement of the major priorities of security, constitution-making, reconciliation and good governance in order to successfully conclude the political transition.

On the humanitarian side, the lives of millions of people, especially the weak and vulnerable groups, continue to be at risk. While the United Nations has officially declared the end of famine in Somalia, efforts must be sustained to further stabilize the food situation in the months ahead, which is critical if another shortage is to be averted.

Despite the ongoing efforts of the international community, including the generous response of the OIC member States and its civil society, coordinated and mobilized by the OIC, millions more remain in need of humanitarian support. Nature is not the only cause to be blamed for the Somali humanitarian crisis; political dysfunction, military and security escalations are also root causes of the crisis. Furthermore, continued conflicts and lack of access to the neediest people remain major operational challenges.

The expulsion of 16 humanitarian international non-governmental organizations from Somalia recently has severely impacted basic relief measures and created a big gap that needs to be filled. The OIC urges the international humanitarian community to work together on how to overcome these lacunae by leveraging the opportunity for the better access enjoyed by the OIC in Somalia on account of its cultural considerations.

Conscious of its long-term commitment to the Somali people, the OIC, through its Humanitarian Coordination Office in Somalia, is set to proceed to the next phase of its mandate. Shortly, it will move from emergency relief to development by focusing on the relocation of the internally displaced persons to their villages and homes as a means of promoting sustainable development. In that regard, a number of water projects across the county are to be implemented.

In the field of capacity-building in the education and health sectors, the OIC is in the process of developing and finalizing a joint project with the United Nations Development Programme. The OIC is

committed to continuing to support the Somali people and stands ready to enhance its operational cooperation with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and other humanitarian stakeholders. It is also committed to entering into meaningful engagement and collaboration, and to working out a shared strategy for the recovery phase in Somalia.

The OIC and its member States are determined to be pace-setters, as displayed in their laudable performance in addressing the recent famine. During the most recent Council of Foreign Ministers in Astana, OIC Foreign Ministers further endorsed the establishment of a trust fund for Somalia to contribute to the long-term development and peacebuilding efforts in that country. Throughout their humanitarian actions last year, OIC Member States pledged and are still raising a total of $500 million to mitigate the catastrophic humanitarian crisis in Somalia.

In conclusion, the OIC stands ready to expand its cooperation and partnership with others for the benefit of the Somali people. We are pleased to enhance our constructive collaboration with the League of Arab States and the United Nations within the framework of the overall peacebuilding and reconstruction efforts in Somalia.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Sweden.

Mr. Grunditz (Sweden): Mr. President, I thank you for convening this timely open debate on Somalia.

Sweden aligns itself with the statement of the European Union (EU) and would like, in addition, to make four points.

First, the momentum gained at the London conference for the political process must be upheld. Support is required if the Somali-led reform process is to produce an inclusive, broad-based, representative and credible political dispensation when the mandate of the Transitional Federal Institutions (TFIs) ends in August. By that time, a democratic constitutional framework must be in place to further unify and rally the Somali people around a common purpose of reconciliation and nation-building. Flexible, transparent and accountable financial mechanisms need to be further developed and operationalized.

At this crucial moment, the Somali leadership, the TFIs and the signatories of the road map have a particular responsibility to demonstrate inclusivity and a constructive commitment. In those endeavours, political and financial support must be forthcoming, contingent on progress.

Secondly, ensuring safety and security is of paramount importance for an enabling political environment. While significant gains have been made, much thanks to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) alongside Transitional Federal Government and allied security forces, security and stabilization can only be sustained if they are accompanied by people-centred governance, basic services and development. The nexus between security, political progress and recovery should be further strengthened. The protection of civilians must be upheld at all times. We echo the call made by the European Union that the resourcing of AMISOM from the EU and its member States needs to be complemented by other new donors. A more reliable, streamlined and transparent support system is called for.

Thirdly, the United Nations has a central strategic leadership role, in partnership with the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development. The United Nations integrated strategic approach should bring more synergy and effectiveness into a multipronged United Nations involvement. Transparency is essential for trust and effectiveness.

As a participant at the London conference and member of the International Contact Group, Sweden looks forward to engaging to make our joint cooperation more productive and effective. Coordination on policy and operational response is vital. The United Nations and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, together with Somali authorities, are central in facilitating that our joint efforts are being brought to bear.

Finally, we welcome the announcement that famine may have ended. However, the situation is extremely fragile, with new alerts of recurring drought. Now is the time to build resilience against future shocks and to strengthen fragile livelihoods. Relief and development are interlinked. Humanitarian actors must be given full, safe and unhindered access to those in need.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Indonesia.

Mr. Percaya (Indonesia): At the outset, I would like to congratulate the United Kingdom on assuming

the presidency of the Security Council for the month of March and for convening this open debate on the situation in Somalia. My delegation also thanks the Secretary-General and his Special Representative Augustine Mahiga for their respective briefings.

Indonesia associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Kazakhstan on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

For too long, violence and instability have prevented the Somali people from living in peace and normalcy. National authorities must be fully responsive to the needs and aspirations of Somali citizens. The regional community and the international community must do better, by further strengthening their support for Somali-identified aims and solutions.

Indonesia welcomes the London conference held on 23 February 2012 and its communiqué, which comprehensively addresses the challenges in Somalia. The next steps to be taken by the United Nations and the international community are extremely important, and it will be critical that Somali stakeholders are fully involved in the efforts. While we welcome political progress in the country and the upcoming completion of the transition period under Somalia's Transitional Federal Government, we also underscore the importance of establishing a future Government that is fully representative of the Somali polity. National reconciliation is crucial, and we hope there is sufficient realization of that fact in all quarters, leading to a reinvigorated and well-supported political effort towards that end.

Indonesia is deeply concerned by the terrorism and violence in Somalia. We support the Security Council's decision to strengthen the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) in order to ensure security and stability in the region. However, the increase in AMISOM troops needs to be supported with adequate and predictable resources.

While the goal of preventing terrorism, violence and piracy is imperative, and it is rightly receiving great attention by partners from the international community, there must also be equal attention given to the need for rebuilding. The building of well-functioning and accountable State institutions and capacities in Somalia will go a long way towards creating an environment conducive to ensuring that measures against terrorism, violence and piracy produce lasting results.

We should also be mindful of the fact that poverty remains a very serious challenge. Efforts and support should be increased to provide the people of Somalia with sustainable livelihoods and to help them improve their conditions. Piracy needs to be considered in a comprehensive context as well, with greater focus on revitalizing local economic activity and the national economy as a whole.

We note that with the increasing international efforts to combat piracy off the Somali coast, the issue of prosecuting and trying pirates is becoming more challenging. Indonesia supports strengthened international cooperation in the prosecution of piracy and armed robbery under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

In conclusion, we believe that the United Nations and the international community must continue to focus attention on the situation in Somalia. We also believe that there is a need to ensure that the solutions devised are comprehensive and driven by the work of Somali stakeholders, embedded in the process of national reconciliation.

Indonesia reiterates its support for the unity, sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Somalia. We will continue to play our part in helping to achieve peace, security and prosperity for the Somali people.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Norway.

Mr. Wetland (Norway): From the talks we had with Prime Minister Abdiweli Mohamed Ali in Oslo last week, we believe that there is now far greater commitment and determination by Somali leaders to move towards lasting peace. While they bear the primary responsibility, they will also need strong support and commitment from the international community.

We are now entering a critical turning point, not only for Somalia but also for that country's relationship with the international community. Together we may now have a real opportunity to bring Somalia out of the misery and political chaos that have plagued the country for too long. If we are successful, it will be the start of a new and more hopeful life for the Somali people, and a major step towards ending the threat of violence, terrorism and piracy, which affects both the region and the wider international community.

It is of vital importance that the international community seizes this opportunity to work together with Somali leaders and the region in their effort to ensure that this opportunity is not wasted. In addition to the humanitarian and other assistance that we have already provided — which in the past couple of years has amounted to approximately $40 million annually — Norway has decided to contribute $2 million to the new stabilization fund for Somalia. We shall also continue to support the process for establishing a new Somali constitution and electing the new Parliament. We strongly encourage both the members of the Council and other countries to use the opportunity we now have to go the extra mile in supporting the efforts to bring peace and stability to Somalia and the region.

The new momentum that we now see in the Somali situation has in large part been created by the military achievement of AMISOM in pushing the militant extremists out of Mogadishu. We should give them full credit for that. We therefore welcome the recent decision by the Council to expand support for this important African Mission.

We must now ensure that the achievements in the military field are followed up by appropriate political measures and other measures, in order to avoid a vacuum in the areas recovered from the militants.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Ethiopia.

Mr. Alemu (Ethiopia): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for taking the initiative to hold this meeting at the very beginning of your presidency. I also wish to express appreciation to your great country for organizing the conference on Somalia last month, which was, by any standard, most successful. The presence here of its Under Secretary of State for this meeting is a further demonstration of the commitment of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to assisting the peace process in Somalia. I also wish to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Mahiga for the excellent work he is doing and the Secretary-General for the serious attention he has always given to Somalia.

The London conference did indeed help draw the attention of the world to the urgent need to assist the people of Somalia to bring to a close a tragedy that has lasted too long. There are in fact hopeful signs of progress in Somalia, and the London conference, far from taking place amid despair, was preceded by some encouraging developments in the country. No doubt, most of the progress was made in the security domain, but the series of defeats sustained by Al-Shabaab and the expansion of the areas controlled by the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) represent significant turning points on the road towards stabilization of the situation in Somalia.

Those gains were not made without sacrifice. It is therefore proper to express our gratitude to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), Uganda and Burundi, as well as to the TFG security forces. Kenyan and Ethiopian forces have also been helping, highlighting the increased cooperation for peace among the countries of the region. The liberation of Baidoa on the eve of the London Conference helped to validate the view that the momentum has turned against Al-Shabaab. Subsequent events in Baidoa have also made it clear that Al-Shabaab has absolutely no popular support, and the reception that the TFG and Ethiopian troops received in the town also demonstrates how much the people long for peace. It needs no emphasizing how much Baidoa was used by Al-Shabaab and its foreign supporters to violate Security Council resolutions, and how much that exacerbated the humanitarian tragedy in Somalia.

It is indisputable that, because the crisis in Somalia is political, its resolution also requires a political approach. On this front too, the TFG has been moving in the right direction, even before the London conference. The local peacebuilding strategy — articulated by the TFG in January in a document on the TFG approach to stabilization and reconciliation in the newly liberated areas — appears to signify seriousness of purpose on the part of the TFG authorities to take up the political challenge with great determination. The tasks that have to be undertaken by the TFG between now and August are also clear and have been articulated in the September 2011 road map. Furthermore, the outcome of the second Somali National Consultative Constitutional Conference, held in Garowe, has laid the foundation for the successful completion of the transition period and for the post-August 2012 political framework.

Nevertheless, the challenges the TFG is grappling with cannot be understated. That is why the enhanced support of the international community is so critical in virtually all areas. First of all, the security environment needs to improve even further and Al-Shabaab must be kept on the run without letup. Those challenges are not

yet overcome. Resolution 2036 (2012) certainly goes a long way in that regard. The increase in the authorized force level of AMISOM to over 17,000 and the reimbursement of contingent-owned equipment, including force enablers and multipliers, is a major move that could contribute to a much better opportunity to stabilize the recently liberated areas.

No less significant is the ban on the export of charcoal, which has until now been a major source of revenue for Al-Shabaab. It is our hope that those sellers who did not mind that funds were going to Al-Shabaab through the charcoal trade will now be dissuaded from continuing the practice. Let me add here our further hope that the maritime component in the expanded support for AMISOM will soon receive the approval of the Council.

It would not be an exaggeration if one were to say that there is now a window of opportunity for consolidating peace in Somalia. At the country level, Al-Shabaab is on the run and is unlikely to regain momentum if the regional and the international effort to marginalize the hardcore elements of the terrorist group is pursued in a principled manner and in line with what is called for by international law and Security Council resolutions. Indeed, as our Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi, said at the London conference,

> "Al-Shabaab is a terrorist organization, espousing an extreme interpretation of a great religion, and is inimical to peace and stability in Somalia and the wider region. That ideology of violence and mayhem can and must be defeated. There is no compromise with the hard core of Al-Shabaab and the things they stand for. Assisting Al-Shabaab in any shape or form is not only in conflict with many United Nations Security Council resolutions, and hence with international law, but constitutes a crime against the well-being of the peoples of our region."

The region is firmly united on this point, as it is on doing whatever is necessary in the security area to contribute to laying the foundation for peace in Somalia. That, in fact, has been one of the major developments in the Horn of Africa — the close coordination and cooperation among the members of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to help Somalia achieve peace and to ensure that the region will have security. IGAD has also been working in close cooperation with the African Union (AU) for peace in Somalia. Moreover, the triangular cooperation among the United Nations, the AU and IGAD has been rather remarkable.

All those developments have been assets for the effort to achieve peace in Somalia. The London conference has contributed to the further strengthening of that cooperation among stakeholders in the peace and security of Somalia. We are hopeful that the upcoming Istanbul conference will enhance that promising process.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 4.10 p.m.